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Isn Cong Relations

OLC 77-3905

14 September 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

SUBJECT: Congressional Correspondence

1. (A/IUO) Admiral Turner has made it clear to me on several occasions that he will not tolerate delays in responses to Congressional inquiries. He has instructed me to adhere to a policy of responding to Congressional correspondence within five days. If correspondence cannot be answered within that time he wants to be advised of that fact with the reasons why it cannot be answered within that time limitation.

2. (A/IUO) In instances such as responses to requests for reports on legislation or other matters in which a longer period of time will clearly be needed in which to prepare an appropriate response, we will request an extension of the five day suspense period and submit an interim response for the Director's signature or, when appropriate, for mine.

3. (A/IUO) I feel, and I have every reason to feel, that the Director agrees that the substance of the responses which you and we have prepared to the Congress have been above criticism. However, I have been criticized for the delays in responses to Congressional correspondence, and in many instances, these delays have been attributable to other offices.

4. (A/IUO) The purpose of this note is to pass on to you the word which the Director has given to me and to alert you to the fact that delays in the preparation of responses will be brought to the Director's attention. I solicit your cooperation.



George L. Cary
Legislative Counsel

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16 September 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: George L. Cary
Legislative Counsel

Executive Registry
77-2323/1

FROM : B. C. Evans
Executive Secretary

OLC #77-3938

SUBJECT : Expeditious Handling of DCI Correspondence
to Congressmen

1. Upon my return from a few days' leave, I found the DCI's note to both of us penned on the transmittal note of your suggested response to Senator Huddleston's letter, to wit:

"7/21 - 9/7 to get this critical letter answered -- Unsat

ES - pls don't let this happen in future."

2. Obviously we should take meaningful steps to correct the existing system in a fashion that will meet the Director's requirements. As you know, my procedure is to initially review each letter addressed to the DCI from a Congressman and in all cases send it to you for action, giving an info copy to the component you are most likely to be in consultation with during the development of a response. I also assign a suspense date which involves five working days for a DCI response or acknowledgment. Having suspended the correspondence if we have not seen an answer by the suspense date, we have consistently sent a written reminder to your office. We also summarize the content of the letter for entry on the DCI's Daily Journal and furnish an extract of same to [redacted] for his machine retrieval for the DCI's use when he meets "one-on-one" with selected Congressmen. In light of the Director's criticism, I have taken steps to make sure that you receive correspondence for handling on the day it is received here (this is usually the case in any event) and would hope that your office will call significant correspondence to your personal attention promptly so that you may give your officers some feel for the best way to handle the development of a response.

3. It is requested that you provide the Director a weekly report on the status of pending correspondence with Congressmen. This could be an appendix to your existing weekly report to him. I also ask that I be furnished a copy so as not to tickle on topics you may have already explained to him as requiring additional time for staffing. I understand you have written a memo to the line and staff seeking their prompt attention to Congressional correspondence.

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4. With regard to style, I would suggest that complicated and highly legalistic language be avoided in the body of the Director's response, but when it is required that it be as an attachment to a warm, courteous letter from him. We will continue to review all suggested responses for the Director's signature to ensure that the proper format has been followed and that the responses have been properly staffed. We are willing to review any suggested response for the Director in draft.



B. C. Evans

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